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ABSTRACT

Numerous variables enter in when teachers plan and implement the reading curriculum. Classroom climate has much to do with who will succeed in reading. The classroom needs to have a variety of reading materials. Each student should then be able to locate materials on his or her interest level as well as locate subject matter that is personally fulfilling. The reading environment should be one of trust, respect, acceptance, and confidence. Teachers should emphasize reading readiness activities and then assess the degree learners are ready for reading a new selection. To assist students in comprehending subject matter, teachers should take time to discuss questions and comments students have about subject matter they have read. The reading teacher may guide students in achieving higher levels of cognition. Then students need to be able to apply what has been read. Most students like to read aloud in class, and oral reading has advantages since both teachers and students can participate in discussion of materials. It is crucial to have follow-up activities after the ongoing guided lesson in reading has been completed. Comprehension strategies should involve critical and creative thinking, as well as problem solving. Depth teaching, rather than survey approaches, should be stressed in ongoing lessons and units of study, and flexible grouping should be used to provide for optimal reading achievement. (NKA)

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Planning for Reading Instruction.

by Marlow Ediger

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PLANNING FOR READING INSTRUCTION

Preservice and inservice education teachers need guidelines as to what needs to be done to develop a quality reading curriculum for students. There are numerous variables that enter in when planning and implementing the reading curriculum. Nothing should be left to chance in planning for instruction. Each part of the plan needs careful attention and assessment. A very important but difficult facet of reading instruction to implement is classroom climate. Classroom climate has much to do with who will succeed in reading instruction. What salient features of quality classroom climate needs to become a part of teaching and learning situations? Certainly, students should learn to accept each other. Being rejected is an awful feeling. Each person desires to be an inherent part of the classroom and possess feelings of belonging. No learner should be denied this feeling. Feelings of being left out and being an isolate are hard to accept and deal with. The reading teacher needs to have a viable goal that each and every student has feelings of acceptance and belonging. No student should be falling through the cracks when a caring environment is in evidence. Caring for others is a vital objective for all students to achieve in the classroom.

Students also like to be recognized for something special that they can do. Students and the reading teacher may provide for these recognition needs of students. there are many things that each student may be recognized for and have esteem needs met. The self concept of the individual is of utmost importance. Success or a lack of it in reading instruction may hinge upon the acceptance and recognition of the involved student (See Maslow, 1954).

An attitude of wanting to learn to read and become increasingly proficient in reading is of utmost importance in a quality learning environment. Reading must be prized highly intrinsically. It is valued for its own sake. The writer values very highly his ability to read with meaning and understanding. Reading has many values for leisure time activities as well as for achievement at the work place. Each student, no doubt, wants to learn to read badly, but there are circumstances, even unknown, that prevent this from happening. Poverty home situations as well as unfamiliar learning disabilities prevent students from learning to read. A good, positive learning environment can assist each student to grow, achieve, and develop.

A variety of reading materials need to be in existence in the classroom. These reading materials need to deal with diverse topics and genres. They also need to be written on different levels of achievement to provide for individual differences. Each student then should be able to locate reading materials on his/her interest level as well as locate subject matter that is personally fulfilling. The reading environment

should be one of trust, respect, acceptance, and confidence. There are learners who may not succeed in reading due to inadequate environments for learning (Ediger, 1997, Chapter Five).

Readiness for Reading

Readiness is a key factor in facilitating any learner in learning to read. One procedure in assisting students to be ready to read a given selection is to guide each to view the illustrations pertaining to what they will be reading about. Basal readers tend to have selected quality illustrations directly related to what will be read. Library books also have numerous illustrations that might well provide readiness for students in reading. These illustrations need to be discussed so that each student can attach meaning to ensuing subject matter to be read. They might also provide a basis for the involved student to predict what may happen in the story. After reading the contents, students may check their hypothesis. This will assist the reader to relate the illustrations with the abstract words to be read. It will also provide clues as to what an unidentified word is. Thus, if a student does not know a word when reading/he/she may look at the illustration on the same page and receive hints in what the unknown might be.

Interest is developed for reading when the background knowledge is activated within the learner. Within the framework of developing background information within students, new vocabulary terms may be presented. These vocabulary terms may relate directly to the illustrations discussed prior to reading. New words may be printed on the chalkboard for all to view. The teacher should lead a discussion as to the meaning of each as will be as used in contextual reading. The teacher needs to assist students individually to look at each word carefully so that its recognition will occur within the selection to be read.

Purpose established within learners for reading a selection is time well spent. Thus, the teacher may state one or two questions for students to answer when engaged in reading. Stated purposes should relate to the objectives of reading instruction. Reading needs to be goal centered. Students may also have questions based on the readiness experiences pertaining to one or more purposes for reading.

When readiness activities are being emphasized, the teacher needs to assess the degree learners are ready for reading the new selection. These activities may be extended, if necessary, such as using additional illustrations from one's own files to indicate meanings for new words to be encountered. They may also be curtailed when students indicate readiness along the way. How? It might become quite apparent to the teacher that students can recognize the new words on the chalkboard instantly, without spending additional time therein (Ediger, 1997, Chapter Six).

Within the Reading Lesson

There is much the teacher can do to assist students to comprehend subject matter effectively. It is important to take time to discuss questions and comments students have about subject matter read. Gaps in knowledge perceived by students need to be narrowed. Words that cause identification problems need remedying. Predictions given by students in the readiness activities may be checked along the way and modified, if needed. Respect for the thinking of each student is important. Rudeness, put downs, and ridicule have no place in a positive reading environment.

The reading teacher may guide students in achieving higher levels of cognition. Thus, students need to to be able to apply what has been read. Applying that which has been learned is vital. If students cannot use leanings acquired, they will soon be forgotten. Trivia then needs to be avoided in the reading curriculum. Higher levels of cognition in reading include critical thought. Separating facts from opinions, facts from fantasy, accurate form inaccurate information, as well as relevant from the irrelevant are vital goals for readers to achieve in critical thinking. Creative thinking also is a higher cognitive level objective for students to achieve. Here, students come up with novel, unique ideas pertaining to interpreting what has been read. Originality of ideas is salient with creative thinking being a vital objectives for student attainment. Another vital goal in higher levels of thinking is problem solving. Here, students with teacher guidance select one or more problems that require deliberation, not quick, fast responses. The teacher assists students to clarify each problem so that it has a chance of being solved. Information from a variety of reference sources need to be acquired in answer to the problem. Relevant information is needed, not the irrelevant. The information then needs to solve the problem. The chosen answer is tentative and subject to change with the testing of the resulting hypothesis. Additional reading may then be done to modify the hypothesis.

Most like to read aloud in class. These students may orally read a portion that contains beautiful language, alliteration, imagery, and onomatopoeia. They also may wish to read that section that deals with the setting, characterization, and plot. Each needs to have opportunities to read aloud. Sometimes, a learner may wish to practice reading a selection before it is read aloud to others, such as in audience reading. What are the advantages of oral reading?

1. The teacher may notice the kinds of word recognition errors made by the reader. Assistance might then be provided to help the

learner overcome the identified difficulties.

2. the teacher may observe and remedy hesitations, repetitions, substitutions, omissions, and additions to the text being read.

3. the teacher may notice added or deleted punctuation.

4. the teacher might wish to observe student fluency in reading orally.

5. the teacher may observe student attitudes toward oral reading and reading in general.

As the reading activity continues, students may discuss their identified purposes that were chosen from the readiness experiences. Students tend to like discussing what they personally selected as reasons or purposes for reading. These questions then pinpoint the learner's interests and motivation for comprehension. Out of these discussions, the writer has noticed, students may delve into critical and creative thinking, as well as problem solving experiences.

Careful monitoring of the ongoing lesson needs to be in evidence. The teacher must be observant of all factors that impede student reading achievement. Portions of the reading selection may need rereading to take care of identified weaknesses on the part of the student. Metacognition skills need to be developed within learners whereby they monitor their very own achievement and progress. Learners then individually rehearse what is known in terms of knowledge and skills possessed and what is left to learn. Too frequently, the student depends entirely upon the teacher for acquiring knowledge and skills in reading. It behooves the learner to become self reliant in mastering necessary skills by determining what has and what has not been learned..New objectives then arise for students to fulfill gaps in reading achievement and progress (Ediger, 1995, 135-138).

After the Reading Lesson

It is crucial to have followup activities after the ongoing guided lesson in reading has been completed. The teacher may evaluate reading progress by

1. having students respond to his/her questions or to student queries.

2. having students retell specific parts of the completed story read.

3. having students react to the contents read by expressing opinions orally or in writing.

4. having students think of a different setting, characterizations, and/or plot than that presented in the story.

5. having students receive feedback on responses given before, during, and after the reading lesson with summarizing statements given positively

6. having students engage in a project to reveal and indicate

learnings acquired. The project might include making a mural, diorama, construction item, frieze, a series of illustrations, a single picture, and/or dramatization (See Gardner, 1993).

7. having students summarize or retell content read.
8. having students outline a narrative or expository selection read.
9. having students work in committees to pinpoint salient points in the reading selection.
10. having students relate contents to other selections read.

After a selection has been competed, the lesson should be extended to include reading writings by the same author or selections on the same topic. Students should be assisted to perceive relationship of ideas read. Isolated bits of information too frequently are forgotten (See Ediger, 1999, ERIC).

Conclusion

Reading teachers need to develop strategies of instruction that assist students to achieve as optimally as possible. There are numerous details involved in teaching and learning (See Dunn and Dunn, 1979). The strategy chosen should help each student to become proficient in word recognition with a balanced approach on analysis and holistic procedures. Thus, each student should become proficient in phonics, syllabication, structural analysis, and use of context clues to recognize unknown words. Holism should be stressed with individualized reading, use of the Big Book approach, echoic reading, rereading of content, the language experience approach, reading of entire selections from the basal, and shared reading procedures of instruction.

Students should be assisted in attaching meaning to reading a new selection through readiness experiences.Comprehension strategies should involve critical and creative thinking, as well as problem solving. Depth teaching, rather than survey approaches, should be stressed in ongoing lessons and units of study. Flexible grouping should be in evidence to provide for optimal reading achievement. No student should fall through the slats and become a nonreader.

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